

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 14-26 are pending in the application. In the Office Action dated November 7, 2006, the drawings, specification and claims were deemed to contain informalities. Claims 14, 15, 24 and 25 were deemed to be unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) based on U.S. Patent No. 5,810,330 ("Eith et al."). Claims 16-18, 21 and 22 were deemed to be unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103 based on Eith et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,934,766 ("Feigel et al."). Claims 19, 20 and 23 were also deemed to be unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Eith et al. in view of Feigel et al., but based on additional subject matter in Eith et al. Lastly, claim 26 was deemed to be unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103 based on Eith et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,356,211 ("Fritsch").

Telephone Interview

Applicant appreciated the opportunity to discuss the instant application with the Examiner and the Examiner's Supervisor in an effort to focus the issues. A proposed amendment to claim 14 was discussed, and the Examiner tentatively agreed that the amendment appeared to overcome the references of record. Applicant now submits this claim as dependent claim 27. Favorable consideration of claim 27 is respectfully requested. Claim 14 as amended herein recites the same subject matter discussed in the interview and recited in claim 27 but omits the "second valve closure member further comprising a hollow bottom portion penetrated by at least one transverse bore extending in a horizontal plane through the bottom portion."

Drawings

Applicant is submitting replacement drawing sheets herewith. Reference character "23" has been removed from the drawing sheets. No new matter has been added.

Paragraph [0008] of the specification has been revised to use the reference character "24" for the housing step. Support for this amendment is contained on page 8 of the original specification as filed, which contained a listing of reference numbers. No new matter has been added.

Specification

Applicant has amended the specification to be more consistent with the suggested format for the specification. A heading has been added for the Summary of the Invention. In addition, a Brief Description of the Drawings section has been added. Paragraphs [0004], [0008] and [0010] have been revised to incorporate the revisions suggested in the Office

Action. The revisions to the specification are related to form, not subject matter, and are not intended to surrender any subject matter, or introduce any new subject matter.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 14, 17, 21, 23 and 25 have been amended to address the comments regarding antecedent basis. In addition, several claims have been amended to revise the preamble in a manner more consistent with U.S. practice. The amendments directed to antecedent basis and the preamble are related to form, not subject matter, and are not intended to surrender any subject matter, or introduce any new subject matter.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102, § 103

Claim 14 has been amended to recite "wherein the spring is placed outside the flow route, the valve comprising a bowl-shaped stop fixedly secured in a housing step inside the valve housing remote from the flow route, the stop having a bottom wall and an opening through the bottom wall through which the second valve closure member extends, the stop circumscribing a portion of the second valve closure member and forming an annular space between the stop and the second valve closure member, the spring being seated on the bottom wall in the annular space between the stop and second valve closure member."

Applicants submit that none of the references teach or suggest the combination of features recited in amended claim 14. For example, Eith et al. does not teach or suggest a "bowl-shaped stop fixedly secured in a housing step inside the valve housing remote from the flow route." In Eith et al., the closest component to such a stop is sleeve 38 in Fig. 1, but sleeve 38 is not fixedly secured in a housing step. Feigel et al. discloses a stop 3, but once again, the stop is not fixedly secured in a housing step. Moreover, Fritsch discloses a closing cap 29 but the closing cap is axially displaceable and not fixedly secured in a housing step. Therefore, applicant respectfully submits that claim 14 is allowable over the cited references.

Claims 15-26 are dependent on claim 14 and incorporate all of the features recited in claim 14. Therefore, claims 15-26 are believed to be allowable over the cited references for at least the same reasons that claim 14 is allowable.

For the foregoing reasons, applicant respectfully submits that the claim rejections are overcome.

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New Dependent Claim

New claim 27, as noted above, is identical to the proposed claim amendment discussed during the telephone interview. Claim 27 is dependent on claim 14 and incorporates all of the features recited in claim 14. Therefore, claim 27 is believed to be allowable over the cited references for at least the same reasons that claim 14 is allowable.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes there are any outstanding issues that preclude allowance at this time, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney, as done before, to discuss an expedient resolution.

Respectfully submitted,



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RPS/CAR/dhm

Attachments: Replacement Drawings (2 sheets)

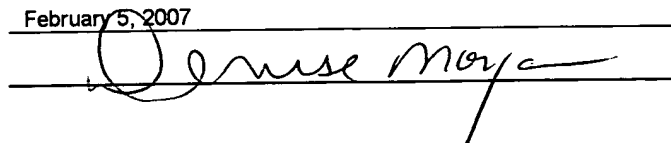
Date: February 5, 2007

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Amendments to the Drawings:

Please replace the drawing sheets with the attached replacement drawing sheets. No new matter has been added.